

# Dyula language

**Jula** (or **Dyula**, **Dioula**, **ڌيوڻلا**) is a language of the **Mande** language family spoken in **Burkina Faso**, **Ivory Coast** and **Mali**. It is one of the **Manding languages** and is most closely related to **Bambara**, being mutually intelligible with Bambara as well as **Malinke**. It is a **trade language** in **West Africa** and is spoken by millions of people, either as a first or second language. Like the other Mande languages, it is a **tonal language**. It is written in the **Latin script** and the **Arabic script**, as well as in the indigenous **N'Ko script**.

Dioula can be heard spoken in the 2004 film *Night of Truth*, directed by Fanta Régina Nacro, Burkina Faso's first female director.

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<b>Dioula</b>	
<i>Julakan</i>	
<b>Native to</b>	Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Dyula
<b>Native speakers</b>	6,852,620 (2019) <sup>[1]</sup> 10.3 million L2 speakers
<b>Language family</b>	Niger–Congo? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Mande</li><li>▪ Western Mande</li><li>▪ ...</li><li>▪ Manding</li><li>▪ East Manding</li><li>▪ Bambara–Dyula</li><li>▪ <b>Dioula</b></li></ul>
<b>Writing system</b>	N'Ko, Latin, Arabic
<b>Language codes</b>	
<b>ISO 639-2</b>	dyu ( <a href="https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=124">https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=124</a> )
<b>ISO 639-3</b>	dyu
<b>Glottolog</b>	dyul1238 ( <a href="http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/dyul1238">http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/dyul1238</a> ) <sup>[2]</sup>

## Writing systems and phonology

### Latin alphabet and orthography

Dioula orthography is regulated in Burkina Faso by the Dioula Sub-Commission of the National Commission for Languages. On 15 July 1971, the National Sub-Commission for Dioula was created<sup>[3]</sup> and on 16 July 1971, it began a study in order to set the Dioula alphabet. An alphabet was published on 27 July 1973 and gained official status on 2 February 1979<sup>[4]</sup>. Some letters were added later, ⟨c, j⟩ for borrowed words, and others were replaced: ⟨sh⟩ by ⟨s⟩, and ⟨ny⟩ by ⟨ɲ⟩.<sup>[5]</sup>

Dioula Alphabet																										
A	B	C	D	E	ɛ	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	ɲ	o	ɔ	P	R	S	T	U	V	W	Y	Z
a	b	c	d	e	ɛ	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	ɲ	o	ɔ	p	r	s	t	u	v	w	y	z
Phonetic value																										
a	b	c	d	e	ɛ	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	ɲ	o	ɔ	p	r	s	t	u	v	w	j	z

In Burkina Faso, the Dioula alphabet is made up of 28 letters each representing a single phoneme. In the orthography, long vowels are represented by doubled letters; thus, /e/ is written ⟨e⟩ and /e:/, ⟨ee⟩. The nasalisation of a vowel is written followed by an n; for example, /ɛ/ is written ⟨en⟩.

The seven vowel sounds may also be either lengthened /i: e: ε: a: ɔ: o: u:/ or nasalized /i ë ε ã ɔ ð û/.<sup>[6]</sup>

The notation of tones was recommended in 1973, but in practice they are not written. The transcription guide published in 2003 does not reiterate this recommendation. Tones are noted solely in lexicographical works. However, to avoid ambiguity, tone marking is obligatory in certain cases.

For example:

- ⟨a⟩ *he/she* (third person singular pronoun)
- ⟨á⟩ *you* (second person plural pronoun)

## N'Ko alphabet

The N'Ko script is an indigenous writing system for the Manding language continuum, invented in 1949 by Solomana Kanté, a Guinean educator. Today, the script has been digitised as part of Unicode, which allows it to be used easily online, but the lack of funding from governments and the official status of French means that use of this alphabet is largely happens outside of formal education and is not systematically used on street signs, etc.

## See also

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- Dyula people

## References

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## External links

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- An ka taa (<http://www.ankataa.com>): a website with a dictionary, resources and media in and about Jula and Manding more generally.
- Database of audio recordings in Jula (Dioula) - basic Catholic prayers (<http://dominicweb.eu/en/encyclopedia/exotic-languages-prayers?dyu>)

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